

Beneficial Employer- Employee Relations

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There are few human relations that do more to promote happiness, peace, goodwill and spiritual and material well-being than a clear, rational understanding of the responsibilities and the rights of both employer and employee. Therefore, a few thoughts on this subject are set forth by one of the publishers of Freedom Newspapers who has had some 70 years' experience as an employee and 50 years' experience as an employer, with the idea of questions from employees or employers or educators to test his assumptions and thus to throw more light on this very important subject.

Employer Also An Employee

Many who have had little or no experience as an employer fail to see that the employer is both employer and employee. First, he is in fact employed by his employees to market what they produce on the best terms consistent to continuous employment. If he fails to do this, the employee quits his job and hires another employer to market what he produces.

He is also employed by his customers to give them as much satisfaction for what they buy from him as anyone else will. He, therefore, has to try to serve both the seller, his employee and his customer.

A Good Employer

A desirable employer is one who not only tries to market what his employees produce so that the employee will have a steady job, but one who also tries to give the employee an opportunity to learn to do work that is more in demand on new products so that he can earn more. The employer always has to try to keep his unit cost down so that he can earn profits for his stockholders,

have more customers and thus be able to grow and employ more people and offer efficient men more remuneration.

If a business is benefitting its employees and customers as determined by a free market, it is to the interest of everyone that it make a profit so its benefits are increased.

The good employer and employee know that creating wealth benefits everyone and injures no one. It is not like getting wealth by gambling or plunder or war or fraud where one man gains materially and another loses materially. And both also know that additional wealth that is created has to be distributed to benefit the recipient of same, whether he is an employee or an employer. There is no way of hoarding wealth to benefit its owner. The wages a man gets do not benefit him until he distributes them for his own enjoyment or lends them or invests them or gives them away. The same applies to profits. They must be distributed. As a simple example: An employee's home is of no value to him unless he lives in it, or rents it, or sells it, or gives it away.

All Should Get All They Produce

Every person ought to get all he produces or its equivalent, no more, no less. To the degree this is in effect, every person benefits. This is true because men who receive the value of all they produce always work harder, do more difficult and useful jobs and produce more goods to be distributed.

The employer ought to get all he produces for the work he does in buying the material, getting the capital, hiring the help, marketing the product, and seeing that it is delivered, and the myriad of other decisions he has to

make. If he makes too many bad decisions, he ceases to be an employer. His profits are just the wages of efficiency.

The land owner ought to get all he produces for utilizing the land. The tool owner ought to get all he produces for furnishing the tools and running the risk that he will be rewarded for his tools. The man that loans the money ought to get all he produces, both for the risk he runs and for the fact that wealth is worth more at present than it is in the future.

And the employe ought to get all he produces, no more, no less, in material things in the year he produces it. This gives him the responsibility of managing his own savings. It makes him have more confidence in himself. It makes him freer to leave his employer and take a better job. When he receives all he produces he knows that he is self-reliant, that he is carrying his share of responsibility and that no one robs him of any of his opportunity to control his own affairs and fortunes in life.

Not to pay him all he produces in the year he earns it debases the employer. It makes division and animosity between employer and employed. It disrupts their natural cooperation on which production depends. It makes it difficult for his employer to be able to figure his unit costs.

It damages both employer and employe and thus everybody.

Rewards are more than material. They include opportunity to develop self-esteem, respect and peace of mind that come from doing what one believes is useful to everyone.

Right To Seek A Better Job

No employe should hesitate to try to find a better job. His employer is not a good employer if he believes his em-

ploye does not have this right. The employer does not own his employe. Nor does the employe own his employer. The good employer thus does not object to his employe having an agent to find him a better job. He knows that his employe might be able to use his production to better advantage by other employment.

If anyone holding a less responsible and a less remunerative job is able to do the employe's job for less, the informed employe is perfectly willing to concede the other person the right to that job. He knows that if he is protected from competition from those below him he will be deprived of his right to advance to a higher and more responsible job.

His job, of course, should not injure his health, and he should have an opportunity to work as many hours as he wants to if longer work increases the production of good things and his own share of them, and as hard as he wants to work in order to advance himself and his family.

He should feel that his job is secure as long as he renders as much service as anyone else, and if he is doing things that seriously increase unit costs, his employer should tell him how he could reduce his unit costs. The employer is willing to let his employe make mistakes if they are not too costly. He wants his employe to use his own initiative. If the employer tries to tell him how he should do everything, the employe's initiative is hampered.

If the employe does not eventually fit into the job and the employer does not believe he is the right man for the job, the employer should give him ample time to find work more suited to his abilities. And a good employer will also give the employer all the time he can to get another employe if the em-

ployee can find a better job. It is a mutual, friendly, cooperative relation.

And there is no strife between the employer and the employee when a man has a good job and receives all he produces, no more, no less. Thus both parties are benefitted. They both thus have a feeling of friendship and security.

A good employer will not dismiss an employee because of age, although he might be required to reduce the employee's compensation if his production decreases.

The employer wants to see his employees earn as much as they can and advance as fast as they can, so long as it does not increase his unit cost.

How Tell What Each Produces?

It is difficult to think of any fairer way to determine what each person produces than to let every person help establish values of everything wanted. Then it is easier for man to find the work that suits them best, produces most, raises the standards of living for everyone, and thus most highly rewards all producers.

Free And Natural Division Of Labor

That simply means that the employer or employee enter into no conspiracy to interfere with competition in serving; nor advocate the government—local, state or federal—passing any laws that apply police force to give any man or group an advantage over others or to take from any man the right to receive all that he earns, and to manage all of his own property.

If one man tried to supply all his own needs, he would starve in a short time. So any law or belief that interferes with the free and natural division of labor—in producing goods and distributing them in a free market—keeps production down and in the long run injures everyone.

Gift Wage

A good employer does not try to give an employee higher wages than other men of equal ability will gladly take for the same work. Over-payment does not only injure the employer by reducing his ability to serve his customers and tending to make him think he is his brother's keeper rather than his brother's helper. It injures the over-paid employee as much or more, by causing him to believe that he need not give as much value for what he receives as others. He thus does not constantly try to increase his usefulness, and tends to become lazy, to produce less than he easily could produce, and to fail to raise the well-being of everyone, including himself and his children.

An Unfair Wage

If the employer believes that he could not replace an employee for the wages he is paying him, he is not treating the employee fairly, and he is harming himself. He will lose the goodwill needed to keep his unit cost down.

A Worrying Wage

An employee who does not believe he could get from another employer as desirable a reward in the long run as he is receiving from his present employer is likely, sooner or later, to lose his job. Thus he is getting a reward or wage that causes him to worry about his job, and this tends to undermine his health and makes him nervous and despondent.

On the other hand, the employee who believes he could get just as great a reward from another employer over the long run has nothing to fear and no cause to worry. He gets the pleasure that comes from knowing that he deserves all he gets and is getting all he deserves, and living a successful life.

Job Security

There would be plenty of jobs for all at an ever-increasing reward if the gov-

ernment were successful in maintaining a free and unhampered market instead of interfering with a free market. This is done by attempting to regulate the quantity and value of money, by subsidizing manufacturers by tariffs, farmers by buying their crops, teachers by fixing wages by law, labor unions by permitting them to initiate civil war in order to get a monopoly wage, and by drafting soldiers into the army and children into monopoly schools which cannot teach them that if it is wrong for any individual to do a thing, it is wrong no matter whether 100% of the group do it.

The employer and the employe, of course, are both fallible. They are both capable of errors and there will never be a perfect employer nor a perfect employe, but both of them are perfectible. They are both capable of improvement in their understanding and their development.

All the above can be summarized into the murder, adultery, stealing, bearing false witness and coveting commandments, which are infallible, eternal rules of human relations. They can be summarized, it would seem, into voluntarism where every individual gets all he earns by benefitting those he serves as much as any other persons will benefit them for the same reward.

Would that there were more and better jobs, and more and better jobs will come from the spirit of individuals. They cannot come by aggressive force or the threats of injury to anyone, because that makes poorer and fewer jobs rather than more and better jobs.

The Freedom Newspapers, of course, are open for suggestions as to how we can have better understanding of employer-employe relations, so that all people can get more joy out of life.